

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 21, 1997**

CONTACT: Lauri Twomey, Special Assistant for Media Relations, Bus: 235-5725; Pager: 232-2237, #6273

**Domestic Violence Community Honors It's Own**

As acting director of the Women's Resource Center at SDSU Andrea O'Donnell spent her entire adult life fighting for the rights of victims of domestic abuse. In the end, her efforts to help others didn't save herself. Tragically, just over three years ago she died at the hands of her partner at the prime of her life. But Andrea O'Donnell did not die in vein. Her legacy in the domestic violence movement continues to inspire those who commit their lives to this cause.

Today at a conference hosted by the San Diego Domestic Violence Council on Domestic Violence, the perennial Andrea O'Donnell Award was presented to another champion for victims of domestic violence, Elizabeth "Betsy" Gross, of the County's Family Violence Project. Ms. Gross was nominated by her peers in the domestic violence community to receive this award which honors individuals who institute change with positive impacts. The Family Violence Project, an interagency collaborative with Adult Probation and Mental Health Services of the County of San Diego, is considered one of the most innovative programs in the country. The program partners probation officers and social workers together in specialized unit working on cases where there is child abuse and domestic violence. On the probation side, the program focuses on holding abusers accountable. On the social service side, it provides support for battered women and helps to protect their children. Betsy implemented and has supervised the Family Violence Project since 1995. She is credited with bringing together representatives of child welfare systems, law enforcement and the domestic violence community, who had for years been at odds.

The first recipient of the Andrea O'Donnell Award was Anne O'Dell, in 1995, then head of the San Diego Police Departments Domestic Violence Unit. Kate Yavendetti of the Volunteer Lawyers Program was awarded in 1996, for her efforts in helping women obtain restraining orders. # # #

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